

TALKING POINTS for ADVOCATES

Federal Funding for Libraries



Reauthorization of the Institute of Museum and Library Services

Lawmakers agree: libraries and their services are a national priority. Garnering bipartisan and bicameral support, the Museum and Library Services Act to reauthorize the Institute of Museum and Library Services until Fiscal Year 2025 was signed into law in 2018.

Libraries — Essential for America's Communities

Despite modest increases for LSTA over the past few years, overall funding remains below the levels from the early 2000's. With funding at the reauthorization level of \$232 million for LSTA (Congress provided \$189.3 million in FY 2019), libraries can launch and sustain urgent and critical services for their communities.

Congress can continue to support more than 120,000 public, school, academic, government and other libraries advance Employment, Entrepreneurship, Education, Empowerment and Engagement (The E's of Libraries®) in communities across America.

EMPLOYMENT

- 73% of public libraries assist patrons with job applications and interviewing skills.
- LSTA funds trained school and public librarians to prepare students for today's competitive job market by providing coding classes and other STEM activities.

ENTREPRENEURSHIP

- Nearly 100% of libraries offer economic/workforce services; about half of those provide entrepreneurship and small business development services.
- LSTA funds allowed entrepreneurs in rural areas to receive business development assistance from a skilled business & technology outreach librarian.

EDUCATION

- 98% of libraries provide technology training.
- LSTA funds created a virtual reality lab at a university to provide access to emerging technologies for faculty and students.

EMPOWERMENT

- Nearly 100% of public libraries offer no-fee public access to Wi-Fi and computers.
- LSTA funds provided online exam tools at libraries, enabling patrons to improve career and advance their education.

ENGAGEMENT

- 97% of public libraries help people apply for government services online.
- LSTA funds enabled veterans to claim well-earned benefits to further their education, get medical treatment, start a business and transition to civilian life.

Of course, each advocate should take these talking points and adapt them to your locality as appropriate, inserting local examples.

2019 Request

Funding at the reauthorized amount of \$232 million for LSTA funding allows more than 1200,000 public, academic, government, and other libraries to advance employment, entrepreneurship, education, empowerment, and engagement in communities across America.

- Please request that your lawmaker fund LSTA at the \$232 million reauthorized amount.
- Sign the LSTA appropriations letter when it circulates.
- Visit a library in their district and learn about the services provided to their constituents.